

and agricultural implements, all in a disorder very foreign to the careful habits of Mme. Zermatt and Mrs. Wolston and her daughter, Frank ran to the cattle-sheds.

There was nothing in them but a few armfuls of hay in the racks.

Did it mean that the animals had broken out of the enclosure ? Were they straying loose about the country ? No ; for not one had been seen anywhere near Falconhurst. It was just possible that, for some reason or other, they had been penned in the other farms, and yet that was hardly an explanation.

As has been said, the farmstead of Falconhurst comprised two dwelling-places, one built among the branches of the mangrove tree, the other among the roots which were buttressed round its base. Above the latter was a terrace with a railing of bamboo canes, which supported the roof of tarred moss. This terrace covered several rooms, divided by partitions fixed among the roots, and large enough for both families to inhabit them together.

This first dwelling was as silent as the oat-buildings in the yard.

" Let us go inside! " said Fritz, with trouble in his voice.

All followed him, and a cry broke
from them—
. an inarticulate cry, for not one of them
could have
uttered a word,

H